(c) to (e) ALIMCO with its own R&D and with the help of other agencies both in India and abroad has developed modern & light weight Aids & Appliances *viz,* Floor Reaction Orthosis, Light Weight Folding Stretcher, Battery Operated Tricycles and Light Weight Adult Size Wheel Chair, etc. ALIMCO has undertaken research for development of Electric Hand and Myo-Electric Hand, Motorised Wheel Chair, Body Level Hearing Aid with Surface Mounted Technology.

Rehabilitation of mentally challenged persons

770. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is a need of trained people, to help mentally challenged persons;

(b) the existing Government organizations/institutions which offer courses or education for the people wishing to enter the field of service of the mentally challenged persons;

(c) whether it is a fact that such institutions are not providing enough people to meet the demand; and

(d) the steps proposed to increase the number of people who would receive education and training to cater to the needs of the mentally challenged children and adults?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Recognizing the need for trained professionals for giving services to persons with mental retardation, a National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped was set up at Hyderabad in 1984 to develop professionals, preparation of service modules and conduct research and development in the field of mental retardation. The Government has also established Rehabilitation Council of India in 1986 subsequently made it a statutory body in 1992 to standardize the courses, ensure quality in the programmes and regulate rehabilitation professionals and personnel.

(c) and (d) Since inception NIMH has trained about 10,000 rehabilitation professionals. Besides, 77,298 professionals have been given continuing education programmes. RCI has recognized 185 organisations including

Non-Governmental Organisations to run the training programmes for the professionals in the field of disability rehabilitation. Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University (MPBOU) and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) also undertake programmes on distance mode to prepare trained people to work in the field of mental retardation.

However, the above efforts need to be intensified, as existing trained manpower is not adequate to meet the demand in the entire country. Existing Teacher Training institutions for General Education have taken up training module for Special Teacher Training who can provide support to general teacher under inclusive education. The existing number of seats in the National Institutes are/will also been enhanced for improving the availability of trained professionals in the field.

BPL tribal families

771. SHRI RAJ KUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 52 per cent of the tribals are still living below poverty line;

(b) if so, the number of the tribal families in different States/UTs with the number of those below poverty line;

(c) the details of the Schemes under implementation to uplift the tribals; and

(d) the number of tribal families likely to be benefited by these schemes during 2005-06 and 2006-07?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) and (b) As per the poverty estimates for Scheduled Tribes made by the Planning Commission in 1999-2000,45.86% of Scheduled Tribes (STs) population in rural areas and 34.75% in urban areas lived below the poverty line in the country. A statement showing State-wise percentage of ST population living below poverty line in 1999-2000 is at Statement I (See Below).

(c) Under the strategies of Rural Development and Tribal Sub-Plan, various schemes under the sectors of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry, MFP Operations, Minor Irrigation and Cottage and Small Scale